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TEAM CANADA NOT EXACTLY HURTING FOR GOOD OPTIONS

STEVE YZERMAN SET TO REVEAL SOCHI PICKS WITH PLENTY OF HOCKEY GREATS STILL IN CONTENTION PAGE 26

So, flu season — we doomed or what, doc?

Have some questions about this year's flu season? How bad is it? What about H1N1? Who's vulnerable? Metro's got your answers PAGE 15

Seems some days you just can't Wynne

Premier takes heat for her government's reaction to the ice storm, particularly for giving out thousands in grocery gift cards PAGE 3

Unfulfilled? Relax with a nightmarish pandemic

Billy Campbell, star of new show Helix, talks about how horror offers escape PAGE 13

NEWS WORTH SHARING.

Is immigration turning away best, brightest?

Baffled. PhD candidates believe they are being 'systematically rejected'

They're experts in their fields, recruited from around the world for their intelligence and advanced knowledge of the most complex disciplines — but Canada's byzantine immigration process has them flummoxed.

University of Toronto PhD candidates Greg Lusk and Nicolás Sánchez-Guerrero are the very model of the highly skilled, well-educated immigrant that Stephen Harper's government is supposedly targeting with its Federal Skilled Worker Program. They've applied for permanent residency but have been rejected and can't figure out why.

"The requirements are ambiguous and even contradictory," said Sánchez-Guerrero, who came from Colombia to study the history and philosophy of science and technology under world-renowned scholar Ian Hacking.

"It seems unusually difficult," added Lusk, who came from the U.S. to study in the same department.

They say there are conflicting instructions for applicants and that immigration officers aren't following the rules and are ignoring parts of their applications.

In a letter to MP Olivia Chow, Sánchez-Guerrero and two other denied doctoral students wrote: "We think that candidates in this category are being systematically rejected."

Policy

"Sometimes you feel ... that they're looking for a reason to reject."

Immigration lawyer Lorne Waldman

While immigration lawyer Lorne Waldman hasn't seen a flood of PhD students, he says over the past five years he's been seeing more and more applications rejected for "dubious" reasons.

"It's undoubtedly true that there were probably some areas where the government wasn't using enough scrutiny before," he said. "But now it's gone from one extreme to another." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

GO TO METRONEWS.CA FOR THE FULL STORY

PANIC, DREAD, RELIEF

Angelo Epassa, 4, went missing Monday morning but was reunited with his mother, Nathalie, by the end of the day. Angelo got on the wrong bus and went to the wrong school, but administrators only figured it out at the end of the school day. See story, page 4. AMY DEMPSEY/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Beet it

City takes another 'root' to melt ice

Nothing beats a beet in bad weather.

On Tuesday, Toronto's salt trucks will be rolling out across the city spraying salt covered with beet juice to help roads melt in the frigid temperatures.

The method is only used when the thermometer drops below -20 C, the point at which salt alone becomes useless. The beet concoction is good until -32 C.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The race for mayor

Soknacki vows to serve 24/7

David Soknacki entered the race to be the next mayor of Toronto on Monday, presenting himself as someone who would bring "responsible management" to city hall if elected Oct. 27.

"I pledge today my full and complete dedication to being mayor," Soknacki said after registering as a candidate. "Toronto needs a mayor who is willing to provide complete attention, presence and accountability."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

David Soknacki.
RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toronto temperatures drop drastically

A Zamboni cleans the ice at Nathan Phillips Square on a frosty Monday in the city, as temperatures plunged and a wind chill alert enveloped the GTA. Strong winds of up to 70 km/h pushed temperatures toward -40C Monday night, setting up slick road conditions in the GTA. Tuesday morning's commute was forecast to be even more treacherous due to low overnight temperatures. RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Tories point icy fingers at Wynne

Probe needed? Wynne mishandled ice storm aftermath, critics say

Opposition critics say Premier Kathleen Wynne and her Liberal government so badly handled the ice storm follow-up that a legislative probe is needed to see that it doesn't happen again.

Tory MPP Lisa MacLeod said Monday that at the top of the list of grievances is the government's poorly thought out decision to hand out grocery gift cards, mainly in Toronto, that turned into a "debacle."

"We are critical of the fact that she (Wynne) abused taxpayer dollars, she abused corporate generosity all in the name of a quick photo-op that turned into a very dangerous PR stunt for her … and that's why we feel that the best way to move forward in the event we have another crisis is to have a select committee," the Nepean-Carleton MPP told reporters at Queen's Park.

"There has been a basic fundamental failure by the way the premier has handled this crisis," she said.

Wynne says in an op-ed piece in the Toronto Star Tuesday that critics now lining up to criticize the government were "silent" when the going got tough.

"I do not believe it is better to do nothing than to try to help. Without those cards, 8,500 families and individuals would not have received help," she said, noting that in just three days, $842,600 in food gift cards were distributed.

Wynne said there are no easy solutions and anyone who suggests otherwise is "not telling the truth."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cash cards

Some Ontario municipalities will use a new method to distribute cash cards to people who lost power during last month's ice storm, but others will use the in-person pickups that caused long lineups in Toronto last week, provincial officials announced Monday. Nine regions outside Toronto will "soon" begin distributing the grocery store cash cards, including Hamilton and Wellington.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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New York Travel Feb 2 - Feb 9/ac	$433
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Calgary Travel Mar 11 - Mar 18/ac	$657

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Toronto police set up a base at 30 Thistle Down Blvd. in their search for Angelo Epassa on Monday.
RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Missing boy found at wrong school

Angelo Epassa. Parents of wayward 4-year-old had feared the worst

Angelo Epassa got on the wrong bus, went to the wrong school and spent the day making new friends while his frantic parents prayed and police launched a city-wide search for the missing boy.

The four-year-old was reunited with his family Monday afternoon, nearly seven hours after his mother received a terrifying phone call from staff at St. Noel Chabanel Catholic Elementary School, where her son is a kindergarten student.

Angelo was not at school.

"It was just a horrible day," said the boy's father, Yannick Epassa, who was home with his wife and Angelo's three-year-old sister when the call came.

The whole thing turned out to be a bizarre mix-up.

Quoted

"I was just imagining scenarios in my head. It's crazy what could have happened to him."
Yannick Epassa, father of Angelo

Angelo's mother, Nathalie Epassa, was with the child outside their home in the Rexdale area when he boarded a school bus just after 8 a.m., but she would later learn it was the wrong bus.

The boy was taken to Nile Academy, a private school located about two-and-a-half kilometres away from his own school, near Finch and Islington avenues, police said. Like St. Noel Chabanel, Nile Academy happens to offer a French program, so Angelo fit right in.

Nile Academy was expecting five new students, according to police.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Mississauga

Seven charged in drugs, gun bust

Seven people are facing a total of almost 100 charges after police seized a loaded AK-47 assault rifle among other items during a drug raid in Mississauga.

Officers with the Toronto police drug squad and Peel Regional Police tactical squad executed a warrant Saturday in the Dundas Street West and Hurontario Street area.

Police say a loaded 7.62-mm AK-47 was seized, along with five boxes of ammunition for the rifle and two empty magazines for a 9-mm Glock handgun.

Other items police say were found in the raid included a bulletproof vest, Canadian currency, powder cocaine and marijuana.

Four men and three women were arrested.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

102.1 the Edge. Dean Blundell Show axed after homophobic comments

The Dean Blundell Show, a popular Toronto shock-jock morning radio program, has been cancelled, Corus Entertainment announced Monday.

The show had been indefinitely suspended in early December after reports of homophobic commentary about a sexual-assault trial for which the show's producer and co-host served as jury foreman.

"Corus Radio will be taking 102.1 the Edge in a new direction in 2014. The station will return to a more music-based format showcasing the best in modern rock," Dave Farough, the general manager of Corus Radio, said in a statement.

The show's co-host and program producer Derek Welsman served as foreman of a jury that convicted a man for sexually assaulting three men he met at a bathhouse.

Dean Blundell TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

At the beginning of the trial, Welsman swore on a Bible and told a court he had no bias against homosexuals.

On air, he and the other radio personalities mocked gay men who visit bathhouses and the intelligence of the assault victims. They snickered as they imagined the perpetrator's excitement about prison showers.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Liz Cheney drops out of U.S. Senate race

Troubled run. Dick Cheney's daughter had angered and upset many Republicans

Liz Cheney, daughter of former U.S. vice-president Dick Cheney, said Monday she is abandoning her effort to unseat Wyoming Republican incumbent Sen. Mike Enzi.

Cheney cited "serious health issues" that "have recently arisen in our family" as the reason for her decision.

But her candidacy had raised hackles in the Republican party and caused a public rift with her sister, Mary, a lesbian, over Cheney's opposition to gay marriage.

In her withdrawal statement, Cheney did not mention those controversies.

Cheney moved her family from Virginia to Wyoming to run for the seat. Her effort to replace Enzi, a Senate veteran, drew virtually no support from Senate Republicans, who rushed to back Enzi.

Sen. Jerry Moran, R-Kan., chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee, swiftly expressed support for Enzi moments after Cheney announced her campaign last year.

During that time, Cheney said Republicans in Congress needed to stop "cutting deals" with Democrats.

"We've got to stand and fight, and we have to defend what we believe in. We have to not be afraid of being called obstructionists," Cheney said.

"In my view, obstructing President Obama's policies and his agenda isn't actually obstruction; it's patriotism," Cheney said. "I think we have to stop what he's doing, and then as conservatives, we've got to say, 'Here's what we believe,' and, 'Here's the path forward,' and that's what I intend to lay out in this campaign."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Liz Cheney, daughter of former U.S. vice-president Dick Cheney.
MATT YOUNG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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[1]Subject to TFSA contribution limits. Please speak to your tax advisor for tax advice regarding the TFSA. ®Registered trademarks of Bank of Montreal.

Workers resort to 'boss-napping'

Monday's meeting in the northern French city of Amiens was not going well.

As farm tires blocked the doorway, two Goodyear managers were trapped in a conference room with angry French workers who were demanding more money in exchange for the inevitable loss of their jobs.

Goodyear has tried to shutter the plant in Amiens for five years without success. Its latest attempt was met Monday with a "boss-napping" — a French negotiating tactic that had largely faded away after the height of the economic crisis in 2009.

More theatre than actual threat, it aims to grab management's attention — by grabbing management.

The Amiens plant has an especially contentious past. Goodyear's hopes to close the plant have been thwarted by violent protests with huge bonfires, government concerns and France's prolonged layoff procedures. Now, the union is willing to accept the inevitable loss of jobs — but at a cost.

In exchange for freeing the bosses, they're demanding an 80,000-euro (about $116,000) severance package plus 2,500 euros (about $3,600) for each year worked.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

'Overpaid loafers'?

"The French workforce gets paid high wages but works only three hours. They get one hour for breaks and lunch, talk for three and work for three."

Maurice Taylor, outspoken American CEO of Titan tires, deriding Goodyear staff as overpaid loafers in a note last year when he had considered taking over the company.

Utah same-sex unions

Top court puts new marriages on hold

The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday temporarily blocked any new same-sex marriages in Utah. The order grants an emergency appeal by the state following the Dec. 20 ruling by a U.S. district judge that the ban on same-sex marriage violates same-sex couples' constitutional rights.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Israel's former PM

Comatose Sharon's health declining

The medical condition of Israel's former prime minister Ariel Sharon is deteriorating further and only "a miracle" could stop the decline, the head of the hospital treating him said Monday.

Sharon, 85, has been in a coma for eight years after a devastating stroke.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Toddler-slapper to serve eight months

'The most terrible day of my life.' Joe Rickey Hundley was on the way to take his son off life support

A federal judge on Monday sentenced a man who pleaded guilty to slapping a crying toddler on an Atlanta-bound flight to serve eight months in federal prison.

Joe Rickey Hundley was accused of using a racial slur to refer to the 19-month-old boy, who's black, and hitting him under the eye as the flight from Minneapolis descended to the Atlanta airport last February.

No excuse

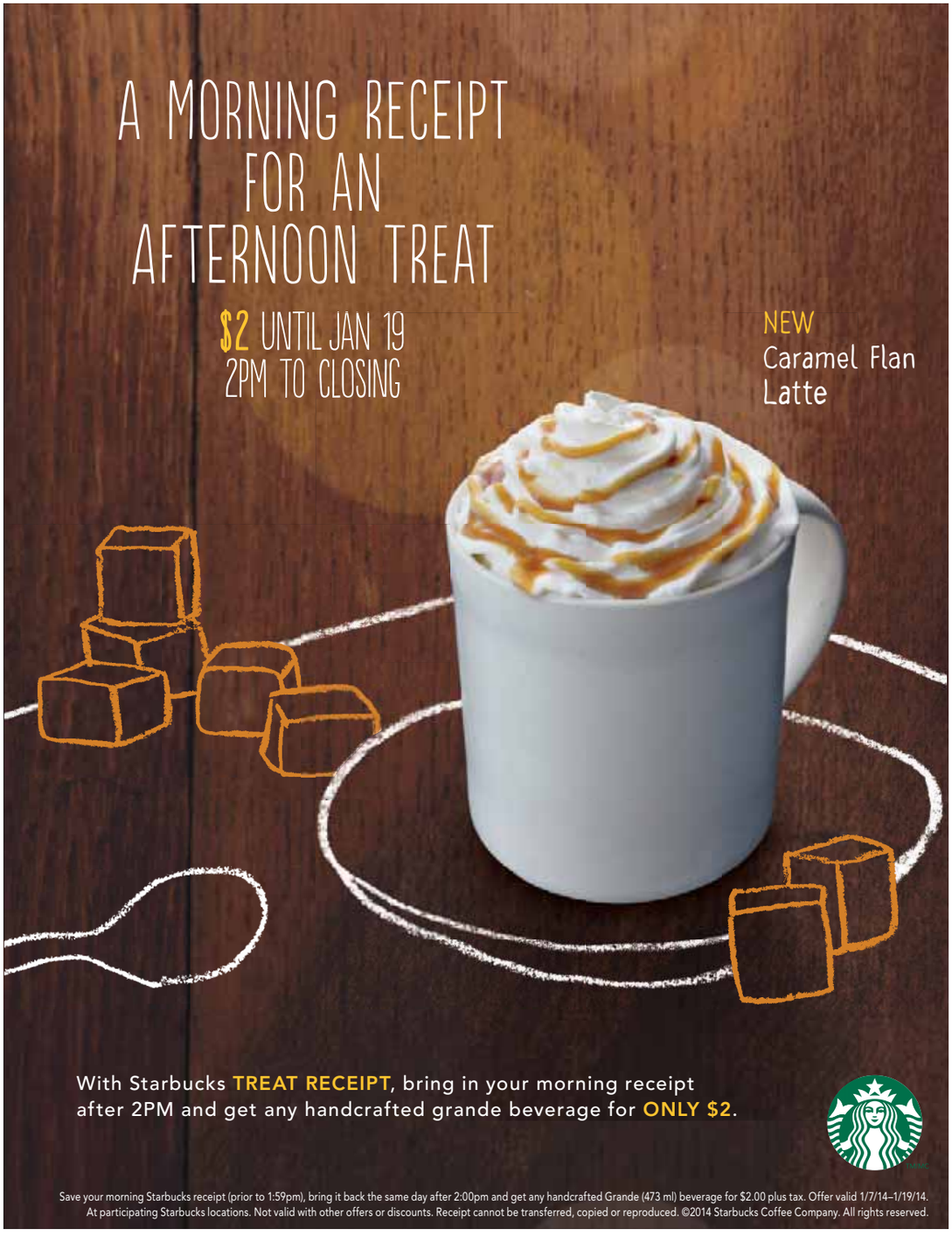
"You cannot assault another individual, regardless of how sad or upset, or even how intoxicated or sick, you are."
U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan Baverman

He pleaded guilty in October to simple assault after reaching a plea agreement with prosecutors.

Prosecutors had recommended a sentence of six months in prison, and Hundley reserved his right to argue for a lower sentence. U.S. Magistrate Judge Alan Baverman said he imposed a higher sentence in part because of Hundley's criminal history, which includes a prior assault.

Hundley's lawyer, Marcia Shein, objected to the deviation from the recommendation in the plea agreement and said after the hearing that she believes the sentence is disproportionate. Before he was sentenced, Hundley told the judge he took full responsibility for his actions and turned to apologize in person to Jessica Bennett, the toddler's mother, who was in the courtroom.

In addition to the prison sentence, Baverman ordered Hundley to pay Bennett restitution of $105 and to pay a fine of $2,500 to the government.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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Quest for symbol of health

A boy holds a cross as believers sing and dance in the icy waters of the river Tundzha to celebrate Epiphany day in the town of Kalofer, Bulgaria, on Monday. Traditionally, an Eastern Orthodox priest throws a cross in the river and it is believed that the one who retrieves it will be healthy through the year. VALENTINA PETROVA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Post-traumatic

Mountie in medicinal pot dispute fit for trial

A New Brunswick Mountie who attracted national attention for complaining that he wasn't allowed to smoke medicinal marijuana for his post-traumatic stress disorder while in uniform has been deemed fit to stand trial on charges of assaulting two RCMP officers, the Crown and defence said Monday.

Cpl. Ron Francis, who faces two counts of assaulting police and one count of resisting arrest, was released from custody after he underwent a 30-day psychiatric assessment.

Francis was ordered to follow conditions including that he refrain from alcohol and non-prescription drugs, report to a local mental-health clinic and not possess firearms. He smiled and waved to family and friends as he appeared in Fredericton provincial court but did not speak to reporters when he left the courthouse.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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How's the weather up here?

In Metro cities across Canada, we're experiencing a myriad of icy, freezing weather, and in Calgary and Halifax — relief. Even Vancouver traded its winter rain for some frosty sunshine.

Vancouver

Vancouver has enjoyed sunny weather over the past couple of days. That's all going to end, however, with Environment Canada calling for warmer weather and the return of the winter rain.

Halifax

It's a weather flip-flop in Halifax. On Monday, Haligonians enjoyed a balmy 9 C, just days after enduring bitterly cold temperatures with wind-chill readings of about -30 C.

Ottawa

After being hammered with freezing rain Monday and a sudden melt, Ottawa faced an Environment Canada warning of extreme wind chills from -35 C to -40 C Monday night and Tuesday morning.

Calgary

Temperatures warmed to above zero in Calgary Monday, but the city was still grappling with record-setting snowfall.

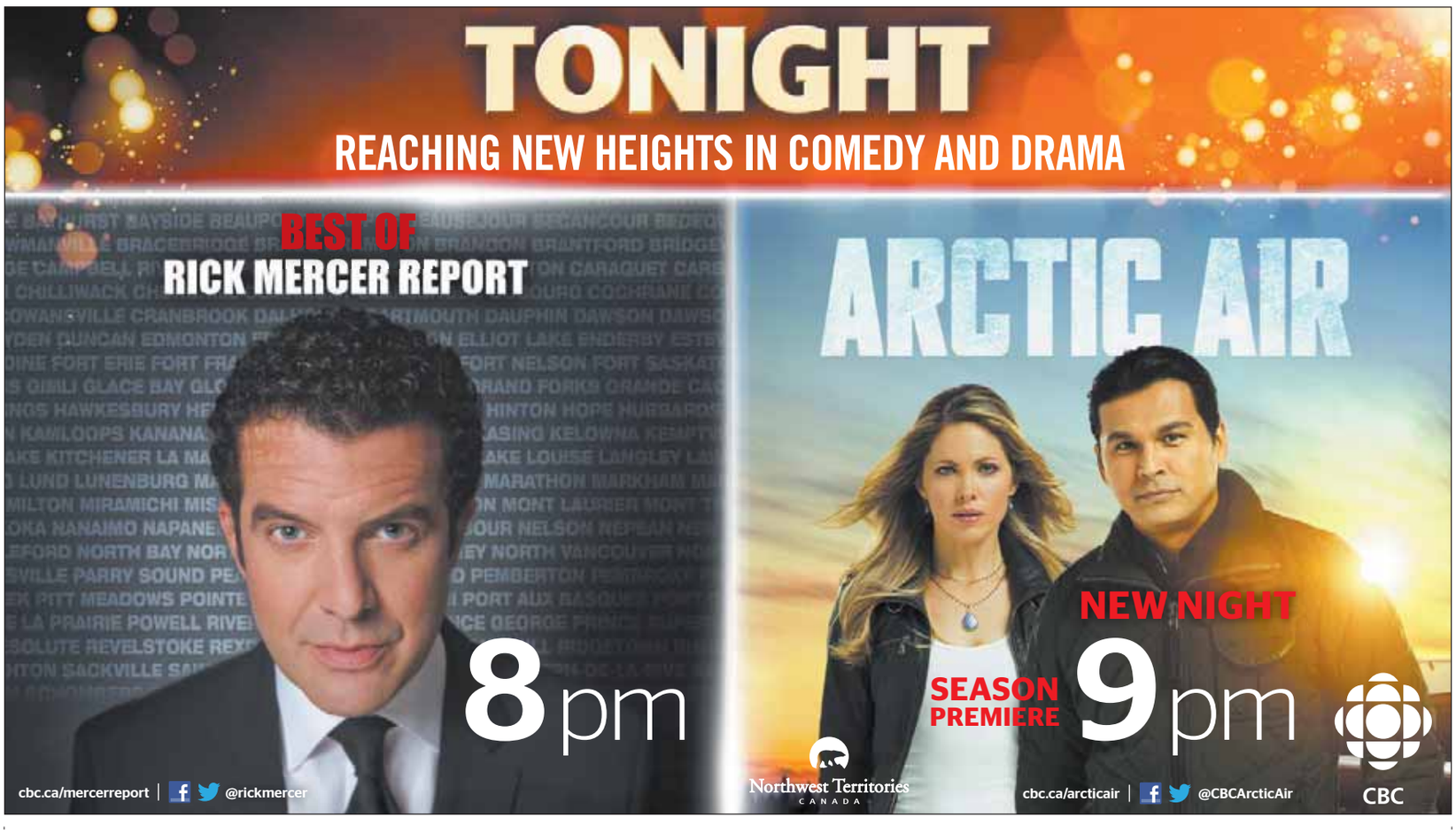
Winnipeg

After almost a month of extreme wind chills, Winnipeg attracted attention when it was revealed it was colder than Mars.

Toronto

On the icy streets of Toronto on Monday, the temperature plummeted to -25 C, with bone-chilling winds making it feel like -40.

METRO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE/THE CANADIAN PRESS



One new way to catch a thief? Try social media

Theft of the Silver Plated Bowl. Alleged light-fingered dude could be in for humiliation via the Internet. Countdown!

DAVID INGRAM
For Metro in London, Ont.

Mike Manuel, owner of the London Music Hall in London, Ont., has taken to social media in hopes of recovering property he says was stolen during a party to ring in the new year.

A Jan. 3 post on the venue's Facebook page lays it all out: Return the item by 6 p.m. next Friday (Jan. 10) or "images" of those responsible will be displayed "using multiple media platforms," the post says.

The Music Hall has even created a faux Facebook event called "Catching the NYE Thief." It's set to start at the Friday deadline.

According to Manuel, at 12:53 a.m. during the New Year's Eve Penthouse Party, a silver-plated bowl valued at $300 went missing.

After whispering back and forth, one person distracted a bartender while another, looking to be in his early 20s, slipped out with the item through an emergency exit, Manuel told Metro.

"It was planned. It wasn't spontaneous," he said Monday. "They talked about it for about 10 minutes."

Manuel said he knows how it all went down because everything, and the faces of those believed to be responsible, can clearly be seen on footage taken from the 64 cameras inside the hall.

On Monday, a photo of one of the people alleged to have been involved — shown from the neck down standing next to the bowl in question — was posted on Facebook.

"We feel we should give (the alleged thief) a chance. We don't want to ruin the guy's career."

Hold on! Maybe not...

London Music Hall owner Mike Manuel shouldn't be negotiating or, worse, threatening a suspect with public shaming, said London Police Const. Ken Steeves. There's a thin legal line of extortion involved when telling someone they must do something or face the consequences via a public shaming, Steeves told Metro. If Manuel is a victim of crime, he should contact police, Steeves said.
SCOTT TAYLOR/ METRO IN LONDON, ONT.

Stolen item: Silver plated bowl, Value $300

As you may be aware, a valuable item was stolen from London Music Hall on New Year's Eve. This item did not belong to the Music Hall, it had belonged to culinary referring (the caterer of the event). The perpetrator and his accomplice waited for the bartender to turn their back as they proceeded to grab the bowl and exit the building from an emergency exit door. (We will release the full video via social media if the item is not returned)

A photo of the Silver plated bowl and the person whom some of are below. We have concealed the face of the person in hopes he sees this message and returns the bowl. He was wearing a red sweater over a white collared shirt & red shoes with white laces.

Any information please contact info@londonmusichall.com

The London Music Hall published this post Monday on Facebook. The bottom left image shows one of the people alleged to be responsible for a theft during a New Year's Eve party, the club's owner says. It also shows the serving bowl the club owner says was stolen. FACEBOOK

Balancing act. Woman protesting marijuana 'ban' in Alberta hospitals

Medical marijuana user Lisa Kirkman says she used to regularly consume vaporized cannabis while in Alberta hospitals, but a sudden change in policy and grinding bureaucracy have now made it effectively impossible for her to access medical care.

"I want to be able to receive medical treatment like every other Albertan, like every other Canadian," she said Monday.

Kirkman said a Nov. 4 Alberta Health Services (AHS) memo, which she described as a well-intentioned attempt to codify a previously ad hoc policy on vaporizer use, ended up resulting in vaporizers being effectively banned in the interim. "In the meantime, we should go back to the status quo," she said. "I need care now. I needed care two months ago."

Kirkman said she needs marijuana to control a host of medical conditions, typically vaporizing every 15 to 20 minutes.

Currently, AHS "is looking at developing a process" for in-hospital marijuana use, according to spokesman Don Stewart. "This is about the balance between patient need and the health and safety of other patients, staff and visitors."

Kirkman plans to stage a "vape out" at a Calgary hospital Wednesday.

ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO IN CALGARY

Lisa Kirkman uses a vaporizer at her home. ROBSON FLETCHER/METRO IN CALGARY

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Dennis Rodman shakes hands with North Korea's sports vice-minister Son Kwang Ho upon his arrival at the international airport in Pyongyang, North Korea, Monday. KIM KWANG HYON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Happy birthday, glorious leader! Your pal, Dennis

North Korea. Ex-NBA players to square off against local team

Dennis Rodman said Monday that a game he and other former National Basketball Association players are planning in North Korea will be a "birthday present" for leader Kim Jong Un.

Rodman's squad, featuring ex-All Stars Kenny Anderson, Cliff Robinson and Vin Baker, will play against a team of North Koreans on Wednesday, which is believed to be Kim's birthday.

Rodman said he was glad to be in North Korea for the game, though he said he has gotten death threats for his repeated visits. He said proceeds from the game would go to a charity for the deaf in North Korea.

"The marshal is actually trying to change this country in a great way," Rodman said of Kim, using the leader's official title. "I think that people thought that this was a joke, and Dennis Rodman is just doing this because of fame and fortune." Instead, he said, he sees the game as a "birthday present" for Kim.

"Just to even have us here, it's an awesome feeling. I want these guys here to show the world, and speak about North Korea in a great light," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Central African Republic

Half of nation left homeless: UN

UN officials are warning the Security Council that Central African Republic is on the brink of a catastrophe, with half the population made homeless since ethnic warfare broke out.

The UN political affairs chief said Monday that about 2.2 million people, or half the country's total population, need assistance. Approximately half the people of Bangui have been driven from their homes, a total of about 513,000, he said. About 100,000 are jamming a makeshift camp at the airport near the capitol.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Burkina Faso

75 officials resign

Seventy-five officials have announced their resignation from the ruling party in Burkina Faso.

In a letter published over the weekend, the officials said democracy had "disappeared" from President Blaise Compaore's Congress for Democracy and Progress party.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Prediction. Spending to slim down despite rabid appetite for tech gadgets

The Consumer Electronics Association estimates that global spending on technology will slip one per cent in 2014 to $1.06 trillion US as the lower average selling price of smartphones and tablets offsets unit sales growth in markets like China.

The decline is off the peak of $1.07 trillion estimated for 2013.

Steve Koenig, the association's director of industry analysis, issued the forecast at the opening of the annual International CES gadget show on Sunday.

The retreat doesn't reflect less consumer appetite for what Koenig called the "dynamic duo" of tech gadgets. Spending on smartphones and tablets is still expected to account for some 43 cents of every dollar spent on technology this year.

But the average price of smartphones, for example, will fall from $444 in 2010 to an estimated $297 this year, despite the number of smartphones sold rising to 1.21 billion up from 1.01 billion. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Appetite for smartphones, such as the iPhone 5C, remains strong. GETTY IMAGES FILE

Evaded security

Protesters get within touching distance of Harper

A protester rushes the stage as Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

A pair of climate-change protesters wearing cheap, thrift-store dress clothing evaded RCMP officers tasked with protecting Stephen Harper during an event in Vancouver on Monday, walking onto a stage within touching distance of the prime minister before they were whisked away.

The security breach happened at a Vancouver Board of Trade event at a hotel, where Harper participated in a question-and-answer session aimed at promoting his government's economic agenda. THE CANADIAN PRESS

New study

Flu shot linked to lower risk of low-weight baby

A study has found that pregnant women who get the flu shot are less likely to have a premature or low-birth-weight infant compared to those who don't get vaccinated.

Despite recommendations, researchers say annual vaccination rates of pregnant women have dropped. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR
93.88¢ (-0.11¢)

TSX
13,495.54 (-53.32)

OIL
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MARS ONE IS LOOKING PRETTY GOOD NOW

SHE SAYS

Jessica Napier
metronews.ca

Last Tuesday temperatures in Winnipeg plummeted to -31 C (and that was the high for the day), making it colder in the city that day than it was in the North Pole and on Mars. Think about that for a moment, one of our country's major urban centres was more frigid than a barren, inhospitable planet that is on average about 80 million kilometres further away from the sun than our own.

I immigrated to Canada from England at age 12 and have often found myself wondering why this particularly frigid part of the globe was ever colonized by humans. As I enter my 16th Canadian winter, I know the unique differences between a snow squall and a blizzard but I don't think I'll ever actually get used to these extraordinary weather patterns that seem as unpredictable as they are harsh.

After taking a painful fall on the flash frozen sidewalk one morning, I made the amateur mistake of allowing my eyes to fill with tears and the moisture froze to my contact lenses within seconds. Ice encrusted eyeballs are enough to make anyone consider permanent relocation.

Canadians never tire of talking about the weather and rightly so — there is just so much conversation material out there in the atmosphere. Phrases like "polar vortex," "frost quake" and "Nor'easter" have entered our everyday vernacular as we wax philosophically about the importance of strategic layering.

Only a Canadian would utter the phrase "It's going up to a balmy -12 tomorrow," without a hint of sarcasm.

But sometimes even the hardiest Canucks in their puffiest, goose-down jackets are no match for mother nature's wrath. When the mercury plummets beyond a certain point, even our beloved national pastimes don't seem feasible. Where's the appeal in an evening at the skating rink when you spend your whole commute desperately navigating treacherous city streets that are covered in a thick layer of ice? Driving up to a nearby ski hill for the weekend might seem like a fun idea until your plans are inevitably thwarted by dead car batteries and freezing rain warnings.

Being an overly optimistic fool, I made a New Year's resolution to start running again. Lacing up for a jog on a dark winter evening is hard enough, but finding the motivation to head outside to traverse slush-covered sidewalks while filling my burning lungs with ice-cold air has proven to be truly impossible.

With a few more months of transit delays, salt-stained footwear, dry skin and frozen fingertips on the horizon, hibernation seems to be the only viable option.

If you need to find me, I'll be tucked under my electric blanket and planning a warm getaway to a country where snot icicles aren't a thing.

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

ZOOM

Hey, mom! Look what I can do

CHARLES DHARAPAK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Baby panda makes gigantic debut

Bao Bao, the four-and-a-half-month-old giant panda, made her public debut at an indoor habitat at the National Zoo in Washington on Monday.

Bao Bao, who now weighs 16.9 pounds, was born to the zoo's female giant panda Mei Xiang and male giant panda Tian Tian.

In recent months, Bao Bao has become more active, moving around on her own and exploring the environment. Now she's working on climbing, but some rocks are still too big.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The zoo's point of view

- The zoo won't make Bao Bao or her mother do anything they don't want to do, a spokesperson said. They will bring her out into the enclosure for viewing, conduct some training sessions with her and sometimes weigh her in public view.

Newborn dreams

"She doesn't even seem to notice the folks who are watching her: Her adoring public. Her focus is mostly on mom right now."

Brandie Smith, panda curator
National Zoo in Washington

Clickbait

LUKE SIMCOE
Metro Online

COURTESY TIKKER

The start of a new year is a time for reflection. It's also a reminder that we're all another year older and another step closer to our inevitable demise. If, like some people, you find contemplating your own mortality terrifying, you should probably stop reading. On the other hand, if the only thing about death that troubles you is not knowing when, here are a few sites that can calculate how many heartbeats you have left.

Death Clock:
This site's tag line is "predicting the demise of others since 2006." Just fill in a few details about your age, place of residence and diet and you'll get a handy prediction you can take to your financial planner. (death-clock.org)

Death Timer:
As a bonus, this site will create an image of a tombstone with your name on it. It will also scold you if you smoke or drink too much. (deathtimer.com)

The DeathList:
If you're more interested in when other people are going to die, check out The DeathList. Based in the United Kingdom, the site compiles an annual list of famous people most likely to kick the bucket. The site had a banner year in 2013, with 13 successful predictions. (deathlist.net)

Twitter

@metropicks asked: .@MyTikker watch approximates when you'll die and counts down to the second. Would you live differently if you knew?

@Earl_of_Halifax: see how it changes while guzzling beers compared to sipping wine, eating wings to salad and working out to being lazy

@stuartchase: useful for those mindnumbing conversations. "U officially wasted 2 minutes of my life. No, really, look at my watch."

@Earl_of_Halifax: I'd probably live faster

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

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DVD review

I'm So Excited

Director. Pedro Almodóvar

Stars. Javier Camara, Pepa Charro, Cecilia Roth

The tray tables are up, the seatbelts are fastened and the passengers are more than ready to fly in this airborne trifle from Pedro Almodóvar. The Spanish auteur is returning to the campier tone of such earlier films as Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown. But it almost seems as if he's operating on autopilot. The rest of the film is aces, including a production design that amusingly incorporates Almodóvar's beloved primary colours (especially red) into the design of the film's fictional airline. The music by Alberto Iglesias also delights, with its jazzy references to 007 and Eurocomedy films. (Skip the movie, buy the soundtrack.) The cast includes many players from Almodóvar's past — including cameos from Antonio Banderas and Penelope Cruz — and they're eager to go along with whatever fun Capt. Almodóvar has in mind. But he doesn't have much on his grey matter this time, apart from making an even campier version of Airplane! Extras include a making-of featurette and a selling-of featurette.

PETER HOWELL

Finding escape in fear

Helix. Billy Campbell, star of new Showcase series, talks about our obsession with being terrified

RICHARD CROUSE
scene@metronews.ca

"I've been reading film scripts for over 30 years," says Helix star Billy Campbell, "and I could probably count on my hands and feet all the truly, truly great scripts I've read. The rest are, to various degrees, garbage."

Campbell, a veteran of big screen features like The Rocketeer and Francis Ford Coppola's Dracula, says, "the hour-and-a-half format of telling a story is unnatural. You either have to do like they do in Bollywood movies and have a four-hour movie tell a story or do like European films do. They tell small, intimate human stories. Moments in people's lives. That's more appropriate to the format."

That opinion may explain why he's been spending more and more time on the small screen on shows like Once and Once Again, The O.C. and The Killing.

His latest project, the sci-fi series Helix debuts on Showcase on Friday. Produced by Battlestar Galactica creator Ronald D. Moore, its sprawling story of a deadly disease outbreak couldn't fit into a 90-minute film.

"Television is a place where you can tell a great story," he says. "You have the time. AMC coined the phrase, Slow Burn Storytelling. You have the time to develop characters, develop storylines in a way that is not artificial. Or doesn't seem to be artificial."

The pilot script for the Montreal-shot series appealed to the ruggedly handsome actor because he's a fan of science fiction, horror and speculative fiction.

"When I read the pilot script the first thing that popped into my head was The Andromeda Strain, then John Carpenter's The Thing and a little bit of Walking Dead popped in there as well. We don't have zombies. I think what we have is a great deal scarier than zombies. What we have are living human beings, terribly infected, who have a pathological compulsion to infect others."

He describes the show as "intense, but still an escape." But an escape from what?

"There seems to be an obsession with not just speculative fiction but stuff that is not our real life. I couldn't say why, except to think that perhaps we're so unhappy with our present lives. We might need to get away. Some people like to escape by being scared."

As an actor on the show he says the most exciting part of the process is "to come to work and try to do the next outlandish thing they've written. That's exciting."

Quoted

"There seems to be an obsession with not just speculative fiction but stuff that is not our real life."

Helix star Billy Campbell

Billy Campbell stars in Helix, debuting Friday on Showcase. CONTRIBUTED

SCENE

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Lindsay's dream of model relationship with toy boy ends with a tattoo

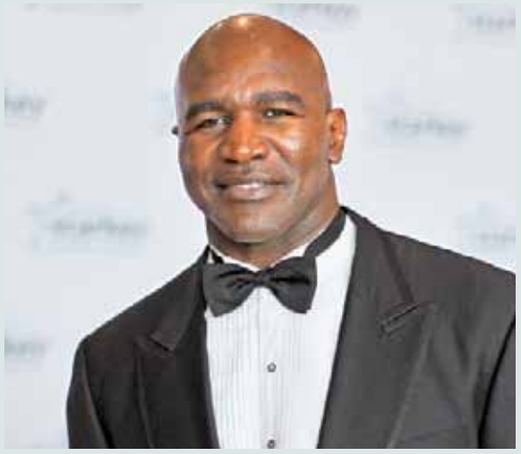
Lindsay Lohan's pursuit of 18-year-old model Morgan O'Connor seems to have ended unsuccessfully, as O'Connor has reportedly told the troubled starlet to take a hike, according to Radar Online. "When he first started hanging around Lindsay, she was totally chasing him and everyone was telling him not to go out with her because she is white trash and would bring his career down," a source says. "But he had a good time with her and got to go to a lot of parties that he wouldn't have been able to go to before. Now he realizes that he can't hang out with Lindsay and he basically dumped her and is trying to commit to his girlfriend again." As a clear sign of that change of heart, O'Connor recently had the name of ex-girlfriend Chiara DiGiallorenzo permanently applied to his body. "Morgan has always really loved Chiara, and he tattooed her name on his arm to prove that," the source says.

Lindsay Lohan. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word



Holyfield's homosexuality comments land him in trouble

Say you are reading this and you are a celebrity. Let's try an exercise: What do you do if you think of something that maybe isn't the most PC thing in the world? Do you: A. Say it out loud. B. Keep it to yourself. C. Write it in a journal which you then burn. If you answered B or C, you have a long future ahead of you in the world of celebrity. If you answered A, we need to talk.

The latest celebrity to fall victim to their own inability to just shut it? Evander Holyfield, who is making a splash with his stay on Celebrity Big Brother thanks to an extended rant he recently let out about homosexuality, describing it as "a choice" that "ain't normal" and can be fixed. "If you were born and your leg were turned this way, what would you do? You go to the doctor and get it fixed back, right?" he said to a fellow housemate.

"You know how handicapped people are born? You can't say, 'Because they are born that way, you can't move that.'" Producers for the series quickly addressed the issue, saying in a statement that they'd relayed to Holyfield that his views "could be seen as extremely offensive to many people. He was warned to think carefully about repeating them."

Good grief. Come on, Evander. You lost an ear. You must know what it feels like to be different. Shut it down!

PAT HEALY/METRO WORLD NEWS

Scott Disick

Disick loses father just months after mom's death

Kourtney Kardashian's famous baby daddy, Scott Disick, reportedly lost his father on Friday, three months after his mother died from cirrhosis of the liver. His father, Jeffrey Disick, died from undisclosed causes, reports E! News. "The whole family is so devastated and Scott is beside himself," a source told E!. "Scott is an only child with no remaining family."

Twitter

@mradamscott
I want Downton Abbey bloopers and I want them now

@msleamichele
Such a lovely holiday break with friends and family. Revived and refreshed:) Ready for this new year!

@WhitneyCummings
I feel like you know you're in love when you can't stop thinking about (killing) someone

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10 Pounds in Six Weeks

Three and a half months ago we introduced Metro Winnipeg editor Elisha Dacey who has teamed up with fitness professional Jordan Cieciwa and registered nutritionist Theresa Albert. Elisha wants to lose half of her body weight and has been writing about it in her online blog, Half Off.

Now that the holidays — and holiday indulging — are over, Elisha is keen to get back on track. So she's kick-starting the new year with a shorter term goal: 10 pounds in six weeks.

Breaking your goal into pieces is a great way to motivate yourself and key to attaining the larger goal, said Theresa. "And losing 10 pounds in 6 weeks — or about 1 ½ pounds a week — is both healthy and realistic for Elisha."

Theresa suggested that Elisha create some eating 'rules' to help her achieve the goal. Rule number one: eat in, not out. For lots of delicious ideas, try Theresa's 'Weekly Meal Solutions' on her website at myfriendinfood.com.

Exercise is also a challenging area for Elisha. "I can't really do much new outside because it's just so cold, and I'm bored with the indoor weights program," said Elisha.

But she has discovered that she likes to dance for exercise. She often plays 'Just Dance' on the Wii for cardio. With that in mind, Jordan is going to revamp Elisha's at-home workout to make it more motivating and fun.

To follow along, and for more work-out tips, check out metronews.ca/half-off.

YLVA VAN BUUREN/FOR METRO

FAQs for fighting the flu

Getting informed. Flu season has swung into full gear and reports of deaths in Texas and Alberta have raised fears that something new is afoot

The H1N1 virus is predominating this year's flu season. ISTOCK

Usually by now flu shot efforts would be winding down, but several provinces are leveraging intense media interest and public concern by mounting extra clinics for those reconsidering getting a shot.

Is this shaping up to be a doozy of a flu season? Or do we, as a society, tend to forget what influenza can do from one season to the next?

There are plenty of such questions being posed these days. Here are a few, and some answers.

All the headlines these days are about influenza. Is this a dire flu season?

Not really. It's a flu season — which means as activity takes off in your municipality or province, you can expect to see a spike of illnesses that can create the impression that almost everyone is sick.

Last year's season, caused mostly by the H3N2 virus, was quite nasty. This year the H1N1 virus is predominating — at this point, anyway. And while parts of the country are now in the throes of full-on flu outbreaks, the activity level is what one sees during flu season.

Alberta's outbreak may have already peaked while Ontario's is probably at its apex now. "It'll be over in a month. There's been a fair amount of activity, but it's not terrible. And that should be it." says Dr. Allison McGeer, head of infection control at Toronto's Mount Sinai Hospital

Isn't H1N1 the virus that caused the 2009 pandemic? Is it different or more dangerous than other flu viruses?

H1N1 is the virus that caused the pandemic in 2009. But it's been circulating for nearly five years, and is now considered one of the seasonal flu viruses. The others are H3N2, also an influenza A virus, and influenza B viruses.

While the vast majority of people who contract flu don't need medical attention, influenza does have the potential to cause serious illness — and that is true of H1N1, H3N2 and influenza B.

There have been reports in the media of young and middle aged adults dying. Doesn't flu normally kill old people?

What is different about H1N1 is who is vulnerable to it and who it seems to hit hard.

Little kids — children born after the pandemic — are most likely to be susceptible to H1N1; fewer than 20 per cent of them had antibodies against it. And older adults, who don't fare very well in H3N2 years, seem as a group to have a lot of protection against H1N1.

But young adults and people in middle age are less likely to have antibodies to these viruses, and those are the serious illnesses and deaths that are getting a lot of attention in the media this year.

Alberta has reported nearly 1,000 confirmed cases, and Toronto Public Health says it has confirmed 210 cases of flu so far this year. What do these numbers tell us? Is there more flu than usual?

Numbers don't mean much when it comes to seasonal flu and they probably shouldn't concern the public to any real degree, McGeer says.

The reality is that most people who have flu never see a doctor, and many of those who do aren't tested for influenza.

If Alberta has 1,000 positive flu tests, it means there's quite a bit of influenza in Alberta. But is that amount abnormal? Not at the peak of an active flu season.

People in my neighbourhood/town/city are already sick with flu. If I haven't had a flu shot, is there still time to get one? Is it worth my while?

Public health officials will always say "It's never too late to get a flu shot." And given that flu viruses will continue to circulate — albeit likely at lower levels — for weeks to come, getting a shot now might prevent you from getting sick later.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Simple ways to start healthy snacking

Eating smart. Simple guidelines can help you make the most of your mini-meals

Registered Dietitians of Canada have several suggestions on ways to make snacks work to your benefit.

•Try to include foods from at least two of the four food groups from Canada's Food Guide for each snack.

•Keep a variety of healthy ready-to-eat snacks on hand, such as low-fat yogurt, fresh fruit or vegetables or whole-grain crackers with hummus, peanut butter or low-fat cheese.

•Buy small packages of food or take small portions from larger packages. Don't snack directly from a large container, bag or box.

•Eat slowly.

•Save snacks that are higher in calories, fat, sugar, or salt and lower in fibre for special occasions and try to combine them with a healthier option. For example, have one cookie with a piece of fruit rather than 2 or 3 cookies.

•Drink water often. Limit servings of pop and fruit drinks, which are high in calories and low in nutrients.

•Avoid snacking while watching TV, working or playing on the computer, reading, or driving, when you might be inclined to eat more than if you were paying attention.

•Limit snacks to no more than three per day.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Give Slow Cooker Meatballs some new life with seeds

THERESA ALBERT
myfriendinfood.com

Instead of nutrition-free breadcrumbs, why not hold meatballs together with nutrient-dense chia seeds and oats? Tastes the same, and it's 100 per cent healthy.

1. Place ground beef, oats, egg, chia and seasoning in a bowl.

2. Mix well with hands and use an ice cream scoop to place into bottom of a large slow cooker set on high.

Ingredients

- 1 lb extra lean ground beef
- 1/2 cup oats, whirred in a blender
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tbsp whole or ground chia seeds
- 1 tbsp Italian seasoning
- 1 jar tomato sauce

This recipe serves six. COURTESY THERESA ALBERT

3. Microwave tomato sauce with the lid off to speed up cooking. Empty tomato sauce over meatballs, cover and let cook on high for 2-3 hours or on low for 8-10.

4. Serve with buns for Meatball Sandwiches or over pasta with salad.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND TORONTO PERSONAL NUTRITIONIST. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

Health Solutions

Chi-chi-chi-chia seeds

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert
DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Chia is a seed much like the poppy seed in that it only grows when the salvia plant is ready to bloom.

Like other seeds, this wee nugget of nourishment contains all the nourishment that the plant will need to begin anew.

You know all about its superior fibre content and its ability to help stabilize blood sugar levels, heck, you probably even bought a bag and have looked at it for a year.

But, besides sprinkling it on your yogurt, what else can you do with it? Here are some ideas:

- Chia is an excellent binder when making meatloaves or meatballs because it holds water better than breadcrumbs.
- Use it ground in salad dressings to help reduce the amount of oil. 1/4 tsp replaces about a tablespoon of oil.
- Soak 2/3 cup of chia seeds in 2 cups of almond milk and set aside in the fridge for three to eight hours. It will thicken into a tapioca-pudding-like dish that is great warm or cold with a dash of cinnamon.

THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM

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There's no business like your own business

A helping hand. Get your entrepreneurial undertaking off the ground

TAKARA SMALL
Metro News in Toronto
@takarasmall

Starting a business is difficult and takes a lot of hard work. Anyone who tells you otherwise is, well, lying.

Thankfully there are a lot of great organizations available to help burgeoning entrepreneurs reach their goals and turn their ideas into a successful business.

Here's a list of groups that can help you and your team get started and develop a money-making enterprise.

Startup Canada

Startup Canada is committed to promoting Canadian entrepreneurship. The volunteer-run organization, with offices across the country, aims to help entrepreneurs and small businesses reach their potential.
startupcan.ca

Canadian Youth Business Foundation

The kids are all right, at least if they have a business idea that needs financial support. The Canadian Youth Business Foundation provides those between the ages of 18 and 39 with online resources and financing up to $30,000. Interested applicants must fill out a form and complete related materials to access funding, mentoring and networking opportunities.
cybf.ca

Small Business Financing Program

This government program has no age limits and aims to help new businesses get started with access to loans and information on available grants across Canada. Those selected have access to financing up to $500, 000 and useful business and startup resources.
ic.gc.ca/csbfp

E-laborate

- Go to metronews.ca/voices/mom-and-pop-shops to see the full list of groups, businesses and organizations that can help you start your own business.

Find happiness in knowing your own brainchild is bringing home the bacon. ISTOCK

MaRS Centre

This not-for-profit organization located in Toronto is all about entrepreneurship and works with public and private groups and businesses to help entrepreneurs succeed. Assistance includes free workshops, instruction guides to bursaries and one-on-one advice.
marsdd.com

Ryerson University's Digital Media Zone

This startup accelerator and business incubator located in the heart of Toronto provides entrepreneurs with mentoring, networking and workspace. Despite being located at Ryerson University, the organization accepts students and non-students into its program.
digitalmediazone.ryerson.ca

EVERY WEEK TAKARA SMALL INTERVIEWS ENTREPRENEURS BEHIND SOME OF CANADA'S MOST SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSES. CHECK OUT METRONEWS.CA/VOICES/MOM-AND-POP-SHOPS FOR THE LATEST ADVICE FROM A STARTUP IN YOUR FIELD AND EMAIL TAKARA.SMALL@METRONEWS.CA TO NOMINATE A SMALL BUSINESS OR STARTUP IN YOUR AREA.

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ACING YOUR APPLICATION

ANDRESR/SHUTTERSTOCK

Every year brings a few new post-secondary school admission trends. It is a stressful time for applicants who are still hoping to receive an acceptance from their preferred school. In fact, the post-secondary school admission process continues to cause anxiety for teenagers and their families. Many parents find that applying to post-secondary institutions is dramatically different from when they went to school.

Here are a few new trends.

Continued increase in post-secondary school applications. Most colleges and universities experienced an increase in applications with many students increasing the number of schools to which they applied. Students feel that by casting a wider net they will have more choices in the end. Almost 85 per cent of college or university applicants apply online, which is one of the reasons why students are applying to more schools.

More schools are using wait lists. At least when students receive an acceptance or rejection, they know where they stand. With an increase in wait lists being used, too many students are in a state of limbo, hoping that they will be accepted to a school from the wait list. This can be a false hope since universities and colleges are actually taking fewer students off their wait lists than they did previously. Only about 25 per cent of applicants ever make it off the wait list.

Different factors continue to gain importance in post-secondary school admissions. While strength of curriculum, grades and test scores continue to be defining criteria for post-secondary school acceptance, the college or university essay has taken on a new importance. Schools feel it is the one piece of information that can help them discover something unique and interesting about an applicant. Making a campus visit, requesting an interview with a school representative, and having communications with the school show them that you care enough to take the next step. Only then do they consider you a serious applicant. *– Metro News Services*

HIGHER INTELLIGENCE

ANALYSIS TRAINING AIDS INVESTIGATIONS

COLOURBOX

Intelligence is no longer just limited to law enforcement, the military or strategic organizations, but has undergone a major expansion into financial institutions, insurance and many large, cutting-edge companies.

The new criminal intelligence analysis (CIA) certificate is an online certificate available through Humber College and appeals to anyone who either works or is interested in a career in criminal intelligence and investigative positions.

"Professional training in the area of criminal intelligence analysis is difficult to find and rarely offered online," says Ann Stevens, instructor and creator of the CIA certificate.

"It is typically provided to law enforcement agencies, with course content that has a law enforcement focus. We have developed the training to meet a broad range of positions that utilize the intelligence process. This allows students to better understand the role responsibilities and how they can be an effective contributor in the field of criminal intelligence analysis."

This program teaches students the ability to identify criminal patterns and trends through proactive use of the intelligence process.

"As criminal behaviour becomes more complex the demand has increased for proactive solutions, in particular link association analysis, a qualified criminal intelligence professional can add value to an organization by analyzing information (regardless of volume) and turning it into something useful," says Stevens.

For more information about this online certificate, visit humber.ca.

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IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GRADUATE

DISTANCE COURSES AND GED TESTING AVAILABLE TO ALL

CANGRAD STUDIOS

Whatever the reason an individual may have for not completing high school, receiving that valuable piece of education does not need to be out of reach.

The Independent Learning Centre (ILC) — funded by the Ministry of Education and administered by TVO — shows students that it is never too late to go back to school and upgrade to gain access to post secondary education.

For those new to Canada, ILC is great for recent immigrants who are seeking Canadian credentials.

Patrick Lopes, 32, who emigrated from Brazil when he was 16, found that many employment doors were not open to him because he never completed high school.

"There was a job opening at the Passport Canada office, but I couldn't apply because I didn't have the diploma," says Lopes.

While Lopes did attend high school in Toronto, lack of interest and personal issues at home got in the way, forcing him to drop out.

"If I knew back then what I know now, obviously I wouldn't have done it because that sent me back so many years," says Lopes.

While he worked as a general labourer for a number of years, it took running into a former classmate to get him thinking about pursuing his General Educational Development (GED).

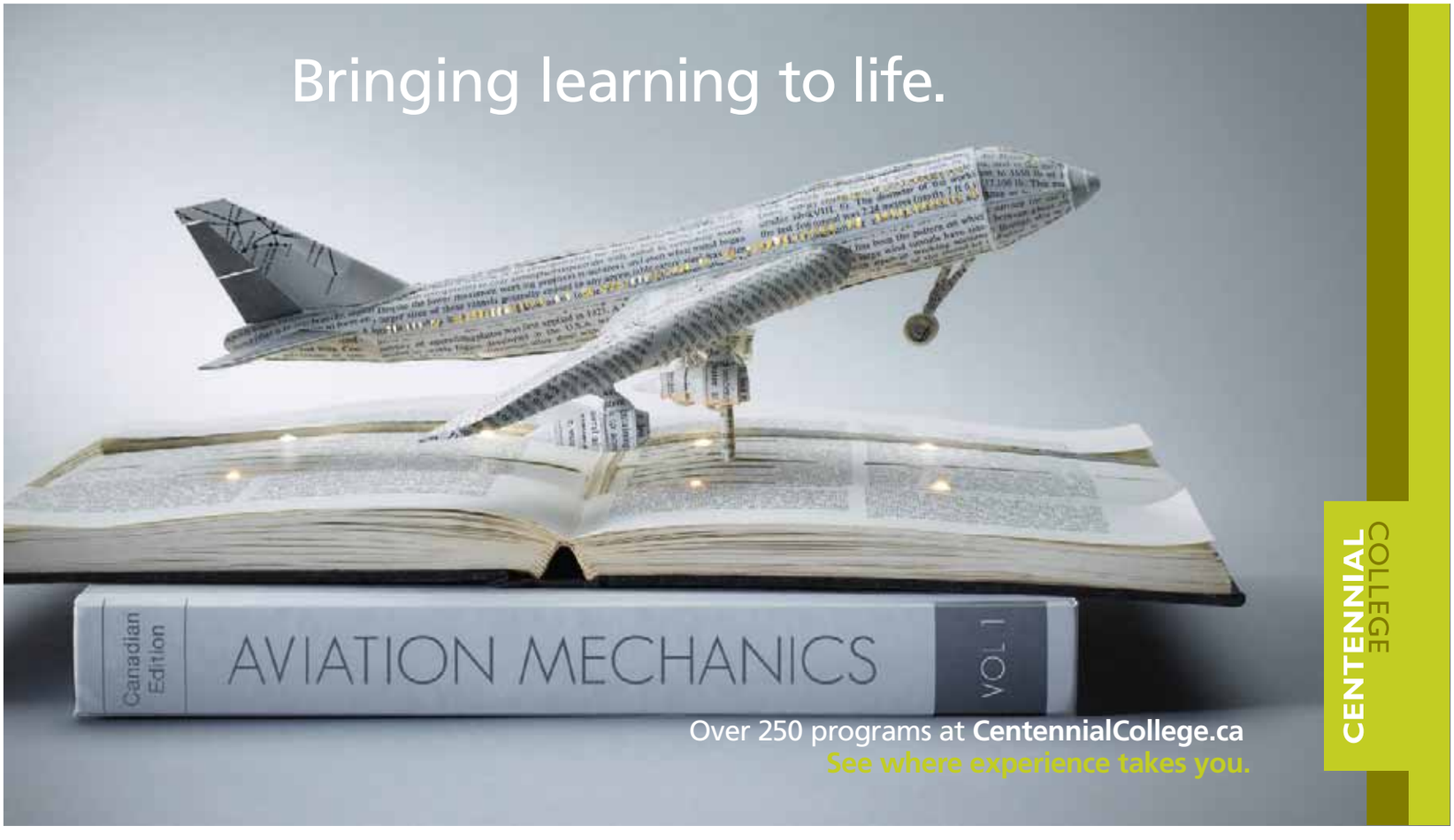
He then enrolled in a four-month GED preparation program and eventually took the GED test in time to apply for a job opening at the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC), the city's public transit company. The TTC accepted Patrick's application with his GED certificate, and eventually offered him the position of streetcar operator.

The ILC offers high school credit courses through distance education in both French and English, and are the sole provider of the GED testing program for the province of Ontario.

"We may be a distance education institution but students are never alone," says Laurie Pringle, director for TVO's ILC.

"We have a team of educators and ILC staff dedicated to ensuring that students succeed."

For more information about the Independent Learning Centre, visit ILC.org.



DEMAND BOOMS FOR BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS

PRESSMASTER/COLOURBOX

In the GTA, there is an estimated need for 40,000 to 75,000 spaces for undergraduate university students, according to Jeremy Staples, associate dean, faculty of business, Sheridan College.

"Demand for business education is particularly strong given the large scale retirements of baby boomers from the professional workforce and the fact that business programs at traditional universities are running at capacity," says Staples.

"This demand is particularly evident in Sheridan's catchment area which contains the fastest growing communities in the country, has the highest levels of immigration, and is underserved by degree-granting educational institutions."

Sheridan's faculty of business is offering five bachelor of business administration degrees in accounting, finance, human resources management, marketing management and supply chain management to meet this demand.

"In keeping with the core Sheridan values that embrace creativity and innovation an inductive approach to teaching and learning has been adopted in these five degrees," says Staples.

"This teaching and learning approach guides students through the development of their critical, creative and reflective thinking capacity so that they can learn to manage change, handle uncertainty and embrace ambiguity."

Students of these programs will learn about the core business skills that they need to function effectively within the global economy. The programs were developed with the support of professional associations such as the Certified General Accountants (CGA), Certified Management Accountants (CMA), Chartered Accountants (CA), Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA), as well as an extensive industry partners to align the learning with their future needs.

While Staples says there is no way to predict how the business world may change in upcoming years, employers are looking for graduates who have the core business skills of each of the five program areas and are also looking for people who can add that extra piece, their unique value proposition to any organization.

At Sheridan, students will have flexibility in program choice until end of year two, when they will focus more on one of the five program areas.

They will also have the opportunity to study part-time, full-time or year round, whichever is better suited to the needs of the particular student.

For more information, visit, business-degrees.sheridancollege.ca.

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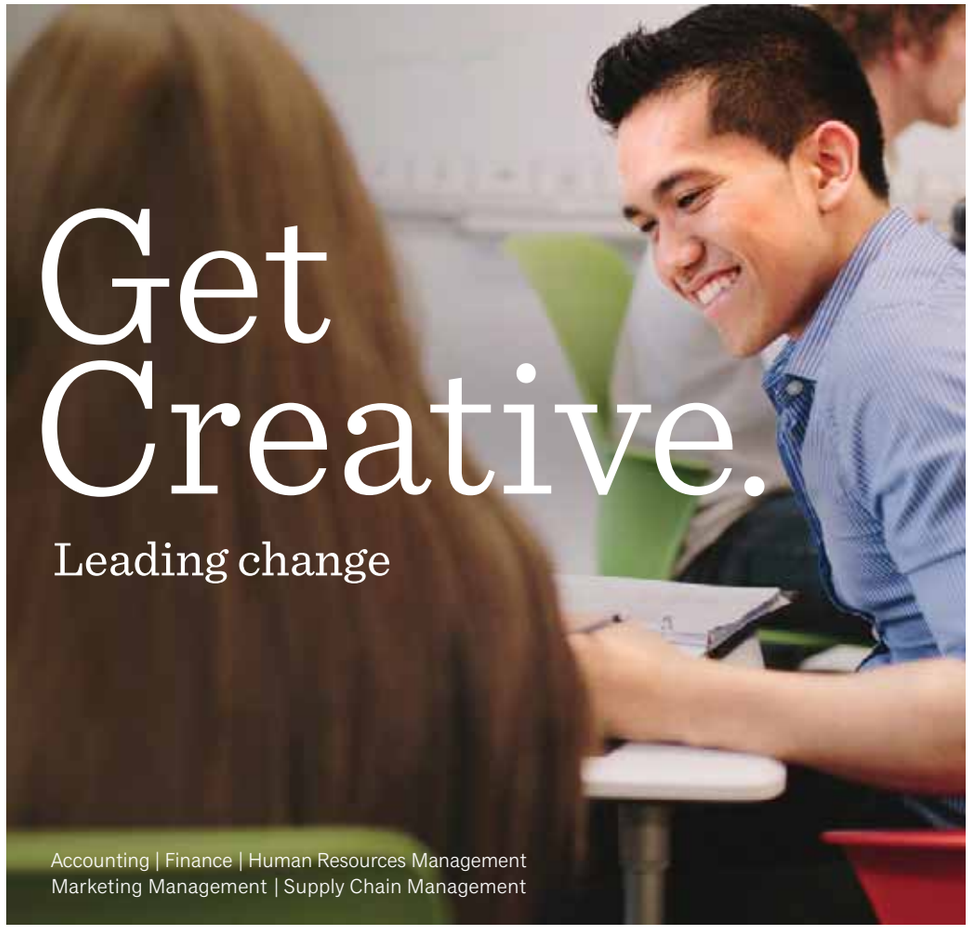

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businessdegrees.sheridancollege.ca

Sheridan

'HIRE APPEAL' IN SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

"If you dream of working in sports and entertainment, you need specialized business training to turn your passion into a career," says Kim Grimes, coordinator of the Loyalist College sports and entertainment sales and marketing program. "In the first four months of this post-graduate program you learn to make an impact on the bottom line – then demonstrate those skills on the job during a four-month field placement. Every aspect of this intensive eight-month program is focused on opening doors to employment."

Student Jessica Hootz has secured a placement with the New York Rangers as the community and fan development spring intern. A Colgate University graduate, Hootz is enjoying working closely with the fan development director.

"This position will enable me to work on a number of community projects in and around New York City, including the Rangers' 'Go Skate' initiative, teaching and involving kids in the sport of hockey," explained Hootz. "My Loyalist faculty went above and beyond to help me land the internship I was seeking. I'm grateful to be a part of this program and would recommend it to anyone interested in pursuing a career in the sports and entertainment industry."

Hootz's peers in the sports and entertainment sales and marketing programs are currently completing work placements with the Ottawa Senators, Maple Leaf Sports and Entertainment, Peterborough Petes, Rugby Canada, the Toronto Marlies and the Mississauga Steelheads.

They will earn their post-graduate certificate in less than a year, building on their degree or diploma with hands-on training. It's all about having 'hire appeal' in the eyes of ideal employers. Specific studies prepare students with hands-on training experience concluding with a work placement.

In addition to sports and entertainment sales and marketing, Loyalist College offers the following post-graduate programs: fundraising and development, human resources management, public relations and sports journalism. Students are university and college graduates with a common goal – making valuable connections and learning employable skills that will get them a job.

MASSAGE 'CAN BE TAKEN ANYWHERE'

GRADS FIND WORK IN HOSPITALS, SPAS AND SPORTS TEAMS

The New Year is great time to get your hands on a new career in massage therapy.

Centennial Colleges offers a three-year massage therapy program that prepares students for an exciting and rewarding career in a field with many different opportunites.

"Massage therapy is a versatile career," says Lori Copeland, coordinator, massage therapy program, Centennial College.

"It is a portable skill that can be taken anywhere."

Graduates find employment in multidisciplinary health care clinics, hospitals, spas, sports teams, and many are self-employed.

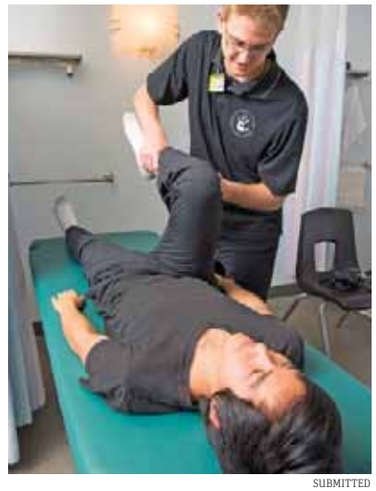
Students of this program will learn how to be a massage therapist by studying human anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, kinesiology, orthopaedic assessment, research methodology, remedial exercise, and host of treatment protocols including sprains and strains, arthritis, tendinitis, bronchitis, and many more.

The student will be competent in recognizing safety considerations when treating many different conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, inflamed tissue and more.

Copeland says that massage therapy is recognized in the mainstream medical community as being therapeutic and there are massage therapists participating at all level of sports competition, including Pan Am Games, Para Pan Am Games, Olympics, Canada Games just to name a few.

While a new year always begins with resolutions of self-improvement and working towards certain goals and dreams, it is not too early to start thinking about goals and dreams for 2015.

Starting January 2015, the three-year massage therapy program at Centennial College will also be offered as a two-year compressed program.



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COLOURBOX

The compressed program has been created for those who are interested in completing their advanced diploma over a shorter time frame," says Copeland.

"This may be desirable for those who come from outside of Toronto and may want to keep their living expenses to a minimum, or those who want to get on with their next career faster and have the necessary finances in place."

The new compressed program will be identical to the three-year program, consisting of six semesters, with the two-year program having a January intake through to the following December and the three-year with a September intake.

For more information about the massage therapy program available at Centennial College, visit centennialcollege.ca.

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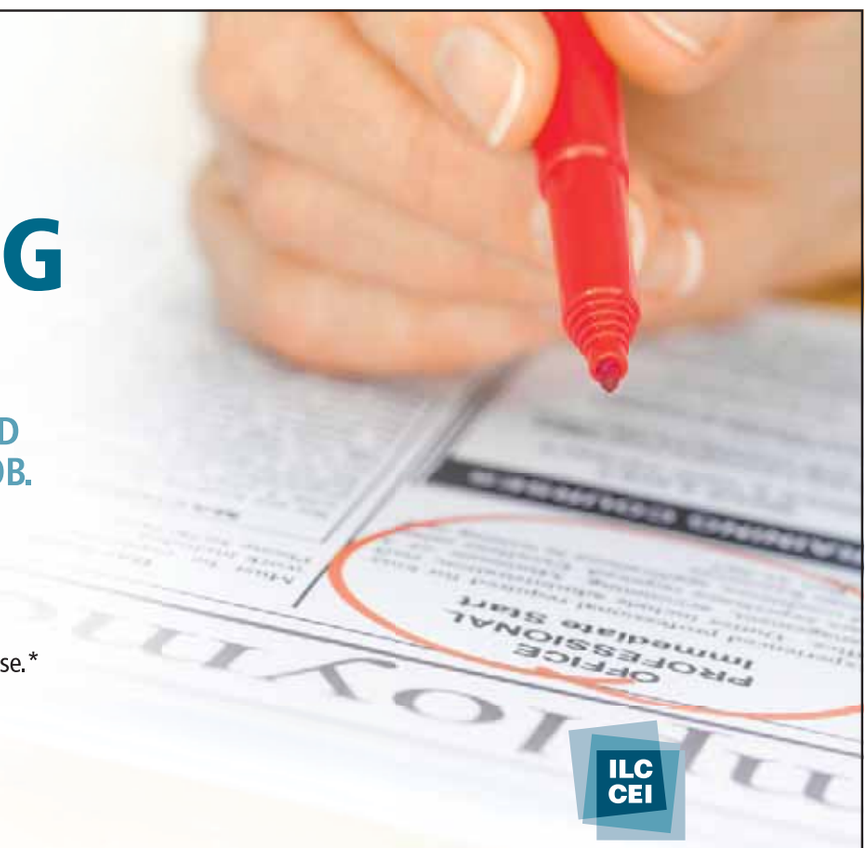

*The GED Test cost is $100

TVO administers the Independent Learning Centre.

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It's 10 p.m., do you know where your money is? ISTOCK

So what will 2014 mean for our green?

Resolve to recover.
Start this new year off cents-ibly by allocating your assets

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

"Which way is the stock market going to go?" After record highs posted by the Dow Jones Industrial Average and the S&P 500 of 26 and 23 per cent in 2013, the future is on everyone's mind.

Are we going to see more records set in 2014? And is Canada going to join the party? (The TSX rose a relatively lacklustre 9.6 per cent last year.)

If I knew the answer I'd be retired in Florida counting my money. Well, I do winter in Florida but I'm hardly retired.

The simple fact is that no one knows what's going to happen with stock markets or interest rates.

There are, of course, the Warren Buffetts who never seem to set a foot wrong. But the Oracle of Omaha admits to mistakes, many of them based on forecasts that never came to pass.

He bought a major stake in ConocoPhillips in 2008 after predicting that oil would maintain its highs and even climb further. It didn't happen. "I try to look out 10 or 20 years when making an acquisition, but sometimes my eyesight has been poor," he said in a 2013 interview with The Business Insider. If even top experts can't predict the market reliably, how can average investors position themselves to either benefit or be protected from market and interest rate moves? Happily it's actually quite simple. It's called asset allocation.

Stock advice

- Pick up Monday's Metro for a new column in the Business section in which Alison Griffiths provides her advice on navigating the stock market and investments.

The term is just a fancy way to describe an investment plan. No one would build a house without a blueprint, but many embark upon the construction of their financial future without the slightest plan.

A great exercise for early 2014 is to determine what the current asset allocation is in your RRSP, i.e. how much in cash, bonds and equities or stocks.

In mine, for example, I have eight per cent in cash, 35 per cent in bonds and 57 per cent in equities. I aim for a 10-35-55 mix but the equities are up a bit because my U.S. investments have been so strong.

Don't worry about picking an asset allocation yet, just figure out what you have.

Usage-based insurance in Canada?
What the Beep!

Select Canadian insurers have started offering usage-based car insurance on an optional basis. This option, while still new, may be a cost-effective solution for some drivers.

Find out what you could be paying and put more money in your pocket. Compare the car insurance market - all in one place.

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InsuranceHotline.com
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MLS

De Rosario signs with TFC: Source

Canadian star Dwayne De Rosario has come to terms with Toronto FC, paving his return to the MLS club.

A source confirmed that the former league MVP and Toronto have agreed on a contract. Attempts to reach a club spokesman were not immediately successful Monday afternoon but a news conference is expected later this week.

Toronto selected the 35-year-old De Rosario in Stage 2 of the MLS re-entry draft last month after D.C. United opted not to pick up his option at the end of the season.

De Rosario made $654,300 US in 2013 but will undoubtedly earn less in Toronto.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Soccer

Ronaldo dedicates goals to late great

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice Monday to help Real Madrid beat Celta Vigo 3-0 to stay in touch with the top of the Spanish standings, and then dedicated his goals to the memory of Portuguese great Eusebio.

Ronaldo said his league-leading 19th and 20th goals of the season "were for Eusebio," the former Benfica star who died on Sunday at the age of 71. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Young Raptors big making great strides

NBA. Valanciunas providing more frequent flashes of becoming a dominant centre in his 2nd season

There are "aha" moments when he is a revelation, a strong roll to the basket for a dunk, a pump-fake-and-a-drive, a solid boxout for a key defensive rebound.

And then …

And then Jonas Valanciunas will do something that speaks to his relative inexperience, he'll have the ball stripped from him when he drops it below his waist where the little people can get at it, when he gets pushed a metre or two from his offensive sweet spot, when he cedes position near the basket and gives up a key rebound.

No one ever suggested it would be a quick transition to the NBA for a young big man and the 21-year-old second-year Lithuanian is proving one of Raptors coach Dwane Casey's pet phrase to be 100 per cent true.

"He is a work in progress."

So far, that progress has been substantial at times this season — the seven-footer looks exponentially more comfortable most games than he did in his rookie season — but to suggest he's arrived flies in the face of history, and reality.

There is no question more is being asked of Valanciunas this year as an integral part of what the Raptors are trying to do. Casey is more willing to let the odd mistake slide, leaving Valanciunas on the court at key moments of close games, especially as Toronto has rattled off wins in its last 13 games.

Valanciunas has shone at times during the current hot streak the Raptors have been riding. In his last 13 games, the Lithuanian is averaging 15 points and nine rebounds per game. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Preying on the weak

Beginning with a game Wednesday at home against the Detroit Pistons, the Raptors will be presented with a golden opportunity not only to cement their lead atop the league's Atlantic Division but also, perhaps, to take a firm grasp on the third place overall in the Eastern Conference.

- Other upcoming opponents include struggling teams in Brooklyn, Milwaukee, Boston, the Lakers and Charlotte.

Raptors centre Jonas Valanciunas is still considered "a work in progress" but he has been a key contributor in the team's recent turnaround.

RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

4 SPORTS

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Depth of field paints blurry Olympic image

Team Canada. With a number of options, Yzerman will provide clear picture when roster is named Tuesday

Steven Stamkos skated on Monday in Winnipeg ahead of Tuesday morning's Team Canada roster announcement. Stamkos is trying to return from a broken leg in time to play in Sochi. SCOTT ISKOWITZ/GETTY IMAGES

Sidney Crosby, Jonathan Toews and John Tavares are safe.

That Team Canada has only a few more forwards who are locks to go to the Sochi Olympics next month speaks to the embarrassment of riches and the bevy of questions facing Steve Yzerman and his management staff.

The 25-man roster that will be revealed Tuesday at 11 a.m. in Toronto will show what Yzerman learned from winning gold in Vancouver four years ago, and how he's adapting to a different situation this time around.

"We're playing good teams; you need good goaltending," Yzerman said back in August at Olympic orientation camp. "You need good defence. You need balance. All of these teams are relatively balanced. Any area of weakness can be an issue."

One area that isn't a weakness for Canada is down the middle. Beyond Crosby, Toews and Tavares, there's Ryan Getzlaf of the Anaheim Ducks and Patrice Bergeron of the Boston Bruins.

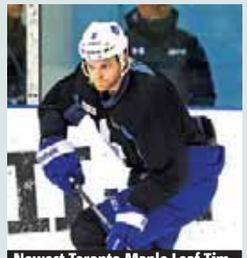
If Steven Stamkos of the Tampa Bay Lightning can return after breaking his right tibia, he's expected to move to the wing, possibly alongside Crosby. Other centres, like Matt Duchene of the Colorado Avalanche, Logan Couture of the San Jose Sharks, Eric Staal of the Carolina Hurricanes and Claude Giroux of the Philadelphia Flyers would likely have to do the same.

"I know some guys are going to have to play different positions, but you do it for the better of the team," Lightning winger Martin St. Louis said at orientation camp. "For the better of the country."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL

Gleason glad to get chance in Maple Leafs' lineup



Newest Toronto Maple Leaf Tim Gleason works out on Monday at Mastercard Centre. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Shy and soft-spoken, defenceman Tim Gleason isn't used to the media attention.

But he'll be ready for his close-up Tuesday once he hits the ice against the New York Islanders in his debut as a Toronto Maple Leaf.

At six feet and 217 pounds, Gleason is hard to miss in the dressing room.

But he seems a little surprised when the television cameras and reporters set up shop at his locker.

He's played all of his 10 NHL seasons in Los Angeles and Carolina, where hockey isn't exactly the religion it is here.

Acquired on New Year's Day in a trade with Carolina, the pugnacious Gleason is expected to be a tough and welcome presence.

Known for his shutdown defence and shot-blocking abilities, Gleason was a healthy scratch Saturday night when the Leafs got blown out 7-1 by the New York Rangers.

With defenceman Carl Gunnarsson day-to-day with a wrist injury suffered in that game, Gleason's elevation to the starting unit couldn't come at a better time

"I've been told I'm good to go, so I'm looking forward to the challenge," a smiling Gleason said Monday after practice.

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
Try to avoid confrontation today because you will come out second best. If possible, go and be by yourself for a while. You'll return physically and mentally refreshed, and with lots of great new ideas.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
You seem to think the worst is going to happen. You should know by now that is exactly the sort of thought pattern that encourages bad things to happen. Be positive.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
If you make an effort today, it will pay off. The only problem is you are not in the mood to do anything strenuous. That's OK but don't blame others for your lack of progress.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You may not enjoy what happens today, not least because you have no control over events. But if you accept it and refuse to be upset, it won't be so bad. You can always control the way you react.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
Everything must be in its proper place and if it isn't, someone is going to get the blame, and it won't be you. You may be easy-going most of the time but sometimes you are like your next-door-neighbour sign Virgo — obsessed by details.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Keep things simple today because the more complicated you allow your activities to get, the more likely it is you will get confused and make a mistake.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It will pay you to be secretive, especially if you're working on a plan requiring the element of surprise to succeed. If people start sniffing around, tell them anything but the truth.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Stop worrying that you are not doing enough or that your rivals are winning. The planets indicate that success will be yours once you learn to relax and not take life so seriously.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You can make a little go a long way today, emotionally as well as financially. The trick is to not give too much away, and keep others guessing what you intend to do with it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Wield the axe and cut back on the things in your life that are not important. That applies especially to your career where, it seems, you have taken on too much responsibility too soon.

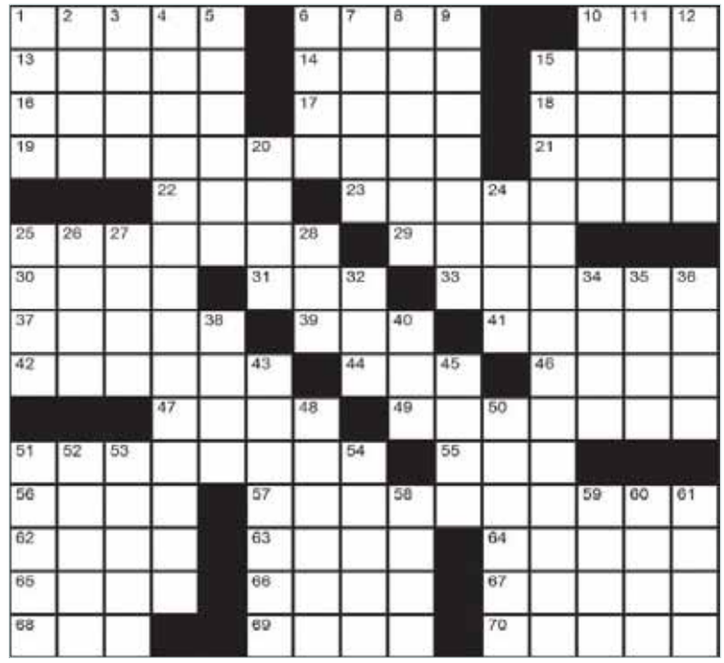
♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
What you have to do today may seem boring but if you do it well, you will come to the attention of powerful people and, in the long-term, the rewards will be worth the effort many times over.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
There is a lot going on behind the scenes at the moment, so don't make too many plans because they are sure to change. If someone asks you to take on more work turn them down. It's the last thing you need right now. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



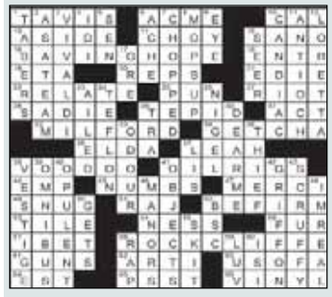
Across

1. "The Lion King" (1994) character
6. Sporty Steffi's surname
10. Straw __
13. Anne Murray's "You Needed Me" bit: "I cried _ __..."
14. Prefix meaning 'Rock'
15. Merchandise
16. Corporate shuffle, in brief
17. Celebes buffalo
18. Shangri-la
19. Loggins & Messina tune covered by Anne Murray: 2 wds.
21. 'A' in AD
22. Rock supergr.
23. Sabre with a curved blade
25. Fractures-checking hosp. spot: 2 wds.
29. PayPal co-founder Mr. Musk
30. Hr. parts
31. __-and-tuck
33. Catch
37. Sherbrooke 'student'
39. Avril's Sk8er's gender
41. Saskatchewan town south of Regina
42. "Four Weddings and a Funeral" (1994) director, Mike __
44. Married woman's title
46. Wet __ (Moisture wipes)
47. Money in Oman
49. "Family Ties" clan, The __
51. Private
55. Uniquely-spelled mountain basin
56. __, California (The Bionic Woman's hometown)
57. Ottawa: 7 Rideau Gate... Canada's __ __ for heads of state
62. Carson's successor
63. French for 'the water'
64. Mosaic component
65. Legendary celebrity
66. Gaelic
67. Broadcast again
68. Bus or train, e.g.
69. River of Flanders
70. Paul of "Bewitched"

Down

1. Baby Atlantic Herring, for short
2. Virginia willow
3. Joni Mitchell's "You Turn __ __, I'm a Radio"
4. Mordecai Richler book-turned-movie starring Paul Giamatti: 2 wds.
5. Edmonton neighbourhood
6. 4.0, et al.
7. HGTV Canada jobs
8. Now!: 2 wds.
9. Parcel word
10. "Hmmm... I __ thought of that."
11. Hockey game place
12. Type of opera singer
15. Bit of #19-Across: "And even though __ __ __ __ I'm so in love with you honey..."
20. Bridge
24. Single-meaning prefix
25. Wolverine's mutant buddies
26. Vex
27. All over again
28. __ necklace
32. Cheerleading prop, when doubled
34. Gambling town
35. Prayer sign-off
36. Scholastically succeed
38. Film director Mr. Petri
40. Gall
43. British Columbia city
45. Faith faction
48. Matt of "Today", and surnamesakes
50. Twirling
51. Ancient Greek city-state
52. Remove the movie video
53. Didn't stop, like a sentence: 2 wds.
54. Charter
58. Plaintiff
59. __ Bator, Mongolia
60. Expressed
61. Bronte heroine surname

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

		8	6		3	7		
9		6				3	2	
				2	5			
				3	9	4		1
4								2
1		7	8	6				
			7	9				
	7	9				8		4
		2	1		6	5		

Yesterday's Sudoku

8	9	1	5	4	6	3	2	7
2	6	3	7	8	9	5	4	1
5	4	7	1	3	2	9	8	6
9	1	2	4	5	7	8	6	3
3	7	6	9	1	8	2	5	4
4	8	5	6	2	3	7	1	9
7	2	9	8	6	1	4	3	5
1	3	4	2	9	5	6	7	8
6	5	8	3	7	4	1	9	2

Today
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Wednesday
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Partly cloudy

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